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311 communication: Heavy snow / Clearing delay

Transcript

<https://otter.ai/u/0kGJV2eL1KIIPaT5ic1YXzPOHF0?view=summary>

Adam Roy Cohoon highlighted the issues faced by individuals with disabilities using the 311 service, particularly regarding snow clearing. He emphasized the lack of personalized profiles on the 311 system, which hinders effective communication and support for those with specific needs, such as himself, who uses an electric wheelchair. Despite registering a complaint, I received no further communication. Cohoon criticized the city's response, noting that smaller equipment was insufficient for clearing snow in his area, and wider equipment was not utilized. He suggested improvements in both snow clearing and the 311 service to address the needs of residents with disabilities.

Action Items

- [] @Adam Roy Cohoon [name = Adam] - Investigate the feasibility of creating individual profiles on the 311 service for people with disabilities.
- [] Improve communication and follow-up with 311 service users, especially those with disabilities, after a complaint is filed.

- [] Review the snow clearing process and equipment used, with a focus on addressing the needs of people with disabilities in areas with wider sidewalks.

Outline

Challenges Faced by Disabled Individuals with the 311 Service

- Adam Roy Cohoon highlights the lack of direct involvement of the environment and infrastructure committee in the 311 service, despite its importance to individuals with disabilities.
- Emphasizes the frequent use of the 311 service by people with disabilities to report infrastructure barriers, which are closely related to environmental and infrastructure issues.
- Adam mentions his initial complaint about snow clearing in March, which he believes was not adequately addressed by the 311 service.
- Points out the lack of profile maintenance on the 311 service, which prevents it from recognizing his specific needs as a disabled person using an electric wheelchair.

Lack of Communication and Effective Response

- Adam expresses frustration over the lack of communication from the 311 service after filing a complaint about snow clearing.
- Notes that his complaint indicated his investment in the issue and his desire for more communication from the city regarding the snow-clearing process.
- Adam describes the situation as one where the city seemed to freeze and not prioritize areas like his, which required wider equipment for snow clearing.
- Mentions the miracle of warmer weather that eventually allowed him to leave his isolation after two weeks.

Proposed Improvements for Snow Clearing and 311 Service

- Adam believes that both the snow-clearing process and the 311 service can be improved to better address the needs of individuals with disabilities.
- Suggests that wider equipment should be used in areas where smaller equipment is insufficient, especially in front of commercial stores.
- Adam calls for better coordination and energy from the city to ensure that all areas, including those with specific needs, are adequately addressed.
- Concludes by thanking the committee for the opportunity to share his experiences and propose improvements.

During the February 2025 storms, Adam Roy Cohoon noted that private contractors cleared retail areas quickly, but the city's snow removal was inadequate, particularly for wheelchair users. Adam highlighted issues with city mapping and communication, a lack of public consultation, and the inability to permanently mark his disability status on 311. Despite these challenges, local efforts and a three-day thaw helped improve accessibility. Adam suggested more public involvement and better planning for future snow events, recalling past successes with army assistance in 1999. Adam emphasized the need for community support and better city coordination to address snow-clearing inefficiencies.



The sidewalk on Front Street East in the Canary District outside my building, on February 23rd, 2025

Action Items

- [] Investigate the process of triaging 311 calls and explore ways to flag users with disabilities for priority permanently.
- [] Conduct more public consultations and encourage broader community feedback on the city's snow-clearing efforts and strategies.
- [] Explore ways to better coordinate with private contractors and retail vendors to assist with snow clearing in the Canary District and similar neighbourhoods.
- [] Develop a public communication plan to provide updates and guidance to residents during significant snow events.
- [] Evaluate the feasibility of involving the public and private contractors more in the snow-clearing process, with clear guidelines and incentives.

Outline

Snow Removal Challenges During February 2025 Storms

- Adam Roy Cohoon discusses the initial storm, noting that the area was cleared and curb cuts were

adequate. The area was cleared of snow just enough, allowing him to navigate.

- Adam mentions that private contractors cleared the retail areas quickly, but the city's sidewalks were not well-maintained, especially for wheelchair users.
- Adam highlights the lack of communication from the city, despite the storm being declared a significant event, and the need for better public consultation.
- Adam suggests that retail snow-clearing contractors could have helped with sidewalk maintenance, but the city's mapping issues and lack of communication hindered this effort.

Impact of Equipment Issues and Communication Gaps

- Adam notes that equipment issues were reported in the media, but he believes there were more places in his neighbourhood where snow could have been safely piled.
- Adam criticizes the city's communication, stating there was no real help or encouragement for neighbours, unlike during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Adam expresses frustration with the 311 system, which does not allow him to permanently note his disability, affecting his priority in snow clearing.

- Adam calls for more public consultation and a better understanding of snow-clearing processes to improve future responses.

Community Efforts and Historical Context

- Adam recalls the 1999 snowstorm and the city's call to bring in the army for extra resources, which he believes helped clear the snow more effectively.
- Public maps help direct community efforts in snow clearing, with commercial and retail vendors also contributing their resources to support the effort.
- Adam emphasizes that the city should be responsible for snow clearing, but encourages public participation to speed up the process.
- Adam concludes by expressing gratitude for Mother Nature's help in clearing the snow in his neighbourhood despite the city's initial failures.

I. Snow Removal Challenges During February 2025 Storms

- City snow removal was inadequate, especially for wheelchair users, compared to private contractors clearing retail areas.
- Issues with city mapping and communication.
- Lack of public consultation regarding snow-clearing strategies.

- Retail snow-clearing contractors could have assisted with sidewalks, but were hindered by mapping and communication issues.

II. Impact of Equipment Issues and Communication Gaps

- Equipment issues were reported, but more snow could have been piled safely.
- There is a lack of city communication and encouragement for neighbours to assist, unlike during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Frustration with the 311 system's inability to permanently note disability status for priority service.
- There is a need for greater public consultation and a deeper understanding of snow-clearing processes.

III. Community Efforts and Historical Context

- Recalled the 1999 snowstorm and army assistance as a successful model.
- Suggestion for public maps to direct community snow-clearing efforts, with contributions from commercial and retail vendors.
- The city should be primarily responsible, but public participation should be encouraged and supported.
- Gratitude for natural thaw despite initial city failures.

IV. Action Items

- Investigate and improve 311 call triaging to flag users with disabilities for permanent priority.
- Conduct more public consultations on snow-clearing efforts and strategies.
- Coordinate with private contractors and retail vendors for snow-clearing assistance.
- Develop a public communication plan for updates during significant snow events.
- Evaluate the public and private contractors with clear guidelines and incentives.

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